



CALIFORNIA ORIGINALS

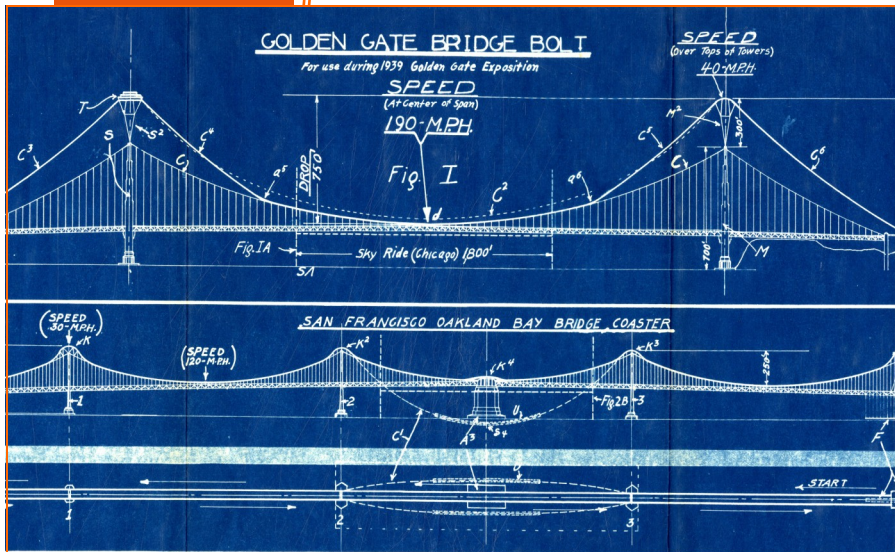
A Quarterly Newsletter of the California State Archives
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Nuts and Bolts

Over the last few months, there has been significant news coverage concerning the bolts holding the new San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge together. Back in 1938, it was Thunderbolts that were making news – a proposal to place roller coasters on both the Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge in time for the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition.



The idea of putting Thunderbolt roller coasters on the bridges came from Connecticut resident Joseph Bazzeghin. "All Fairs have one project which is the outstanding feature of the Fair, such as the Eiffel Tower of the 1900 Paris Exposition, the Skyride of the 1933-34 Chicago Fair, etc.," wrote Bazzeghin. "Despite the impressive size and nature of these special features, they were none the less meaningless, purposeless, and artificial because they could have been built of any size or shape, given any kind of a name, and made to symbolize any cause of purpose. They were also common and ordinary because they could have been built anywhere on the face of the earth. On the other hand, there is a definite purpose and

principle behind the Bridge Coaster Ride because a suspension bridge is obviously made to order for this type of ride, the two going together just as naturally as ham and eggs, man and wife, etc." In response to Bazzeghin's proposal, Chief Engineer C.H. Purcell wrote, "There are several objections to your proposal. A sufficient one is the fact that the cars on the coaster moving at the speeds you propose [175 to 200 miles per hour] would so distract the operators of motor vehicles on the bridge as to increase the probability of accident."

The blueprints and correspondence between Bazzeghin and the Department of Public Works can be found in the records of the Toll Bridge Authority (ID number F2517:690) housed in the California State Archives.

By Linda Johnson, Archivist

From the State Archivist

This issue's featured article about the roller coasters proposed for the Bay Bridge and Golden Gate Bridge caused me to think about the symbolism of bridges. The State Archives builds bridges to the past by helping people discover records that protect their rights, track the history of state laws, learn how government operates, and trace their roots through genealogy research. Bridges allow us to move from one place to another and archives allow us to move from one time to another. Just like bridges are built to endure over time, archives exist to preserve records that will endure for use by future generations.

Nancy Zimmerman Lenoil, State Archivist

"Preserving and Promoting the History of California"

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Program Notes

Accessioning Program

On average, the California State Archives receives more than 4,000 cubic feet of records each year. One of the core functions of the archivists is accessioning – the process of gaining legal, physical, and intellectual control of records received from state agencies, the legislature, courts, and private donors. During this process, archivists identify the records creator, content, volume, and formats. Archivists also survey the records for preservation concerns such as mold, mildew, and pests.

Not all records received by the State Archives are retained. When records are received, the archivists determine if the records have archival value (also called enduring value). This determination is made through a series of appraisal steps, which start with the review of agency records retention schedules and continues during accessioning and the final steps of processing. Throughout the appraisal process, archivists ask a series of questions: Is the information in the records unique? Do the records reflect activities pertinent to the duties and mission of the state agency or department? Who created the records? Do the documents have intrinsic value beyond the information they contain?

Records identified for retention are placed in acid-free boxes for long-term storage and the archivist creates an accession record with an accurate description of the documents. Once the records have been fully accessioned they are available to anyone, barring any restrictions under the California Public Records Act or other state law.

Accessioning is just the first step in the arrangement and description of the records. The records are further reviewed and described in detailed guides that enable researchers to identify records they want to use.

By Jeff Crawford, Accessioning Program Lead

Meet the Staff

Linda Johnson, Archivist

Linda Johnson joined the staff at the California State Archives in 1997 after working as collection manager for Special Collections at Shields Library, University of California, Davis, and as an assistant archivist at the Center for Sacramento History.



At the State Archives, she has served as co-lead for the State Records Appraisal Program and as coordinator for the Reference Program. Currently, she is the coordinator for the Education and Outreach Program, which has been, by far, the most rewarding. “I love bringing the Archives to the attention of the public, particularly to students of all ages. Generating interest in history through the use of primary source documents adds so much to the learning experience. Access to public records is paramount in a democratic society and creates a more informed citizenry. I am happy to be a part of that process.”

Linda earned her Master of Arts degree in public history from California State University, Sacramento, where she also completed her undergraduate work. During her graduate years, Linda worked as an intern at the State Archives and the San Joaquin County Historical Society. She was also a researcher for a documentary filmmaker.



Records in the Spotlight

California Un-American Activities Committees

From 1940 to the 1960s, the California Legislature created several committees to investigate so-called un-American activities. Early investigations targeted communists and their influence within state government and labor unions, fascist and Nazi movements during World War II, and subversive and seditious groups. By the 1960s, the committees' emphasis turned to investigating communist influence in racial unrest and campus protests as well as the anti-Vietnam War movement.

The records of the California Un-American Activities Committees (ID number 93-04-12) comprise 80 cubic feet of reports, studies, newspaper clippings, transcripts, publications, depositions, and similar investigative background materials. One record series of particular interest is the Index Cards, which include approximately 125,000 alphabetized and cross-indexed file cards on approximately 20,000 organizations and individuals. The cards provide background information on the individuals and their un-American activities and are cross-referenced to materials gathered during the investigations. The collection provides a wealth of research opportunities for historians of the Cold War, the Vietnam War protests, and the American labor movement.

By Jeff Crawford, Archivist

STEINBECK, John

Author of "In Dubious Battle" - strike novel. "Cup of Gold". Pacific Weekly, 2/3/36, page 59; New Book entitled "Of Mice and Men". Articles in S. F. Daily News entitled "Harvest Gypsies". 11/9/36. Pacific Weekly Article on Cotton Pickers. 11/14/36. Delegate to Radical Western Writers' Congress. 4/1/38. Article in PDW regarding racial prejudices among agricultural workers. 9/21/38. (See letter) As chairman of Committee to aid Agricultural organization and signed by Hope Athearn (by Ruth Shepardson) sought contributions for UCAFAWA and condemning the Associate Farmers. 9/29/38. Lives at Los Gatos, California. Formerly of Salinas. Author of "Grapes of Wrath". 6/8/40. Mont. Penin. Herald: In Michoacan, Mexico with Herbert Kline and collaborating on a Mexican documentary picture. 6/20/40. PDW: A-38; comes from Irish-German stock; Grad. of Salinas Hi School and went irregularly to Stanford for a period of 8 years, never getting degree; worked as reporter on NY paper, fired for editorializing too much; bricklayer and worked on Madison Square Garden; chemist and printers apprentice; "Cup of Gold" was 1st published book - "Tortilla Flat" won him recognition in 1935; always travels incognito, using alias Dr. Beckstein; lives in Los Gatos on ranch. Fortune made from his books is deposited in

(Over)

CUAC index card for John Steinbeck

Check [Minerva](#), our online catalog, as well as the [Online Archive of California](#) for descriptions of the Archives' records!

Recently Processed Records

State Agency Records

Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice

State Legislature Records

Doris Allen Papers
Peter Chacon Papers
Patrick Nolan Papers

Bruce Bronzan Papers
Charles Imbrecht Papers
Louis Papan Papers

Paul Carpenter Papers
Carole Migden Papers
Alan Robbins Papers



Western Archives Institute

The Western Archives Institute is an intensive two-week program that provides integrated instruction in basic archival practices to people whose jobs require a fundamental understanding of archival skills, but who have little or no previous archives education; people who have expanding responsibility for archival materials; people who are practicing archivists but have not received formal instruction; and people who demonstrate a commitment to an archival career.

This summer, the 27th annual Western Archives Institute is located on the campus of the University of California, Riverside. Gregory S. Hunter, PhD, CA, CRM, is serving as principal faculty member. A diverse curriculum includes history and development of the profession, theory and terminology, records management, appraisal, arrangement, description, manuscripts acquisition, archives and the law, photographs, preservation administration, reference and access, outreach programs, and managing archival programs and institutions. The Institute also features site visits to historical records repositories: the A.K. Smiley Public Library and Civil War Memorial, the National Archives at Riverside, the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens, and the UCR/California Museum of Photography.

Every three years, the Institute shifts between northern and southern California. The Institute will be held in Riverside once more in 2014, then move north in 2015. The Institute is co-sponsored by the Society of California Archivists and the California State Archives. For additional information, visit www.sos.ca.gov/archives/wai

By Jessica Knox, Archivist and WAI Administrator

Upcoming Events

July 7-19	Western Archives Institute	www.sos.ca.gov/archives/wai
July 10-13	National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators Annual Meeting	www.nagara.org
August 11-17	Society of American Archivists/Council of State Archivists Joint Annual Meeting	www.archivists.org
July 26, August 30, September 27	Monthly Public Tours of the California State Archives	www.sos.ca.gov/archives/tour

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For the California Museum visit
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